

# **Three Thousand Generations of Native Americans in Rocky Mountain National Park: the emerging story of the park's natural and cultural landscapes since the last Ice Age**

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Greeley, Colorado**

**Centennial Science Behind the Scenery  
Rocky Mountain National Park**

**July 30, 2015.**

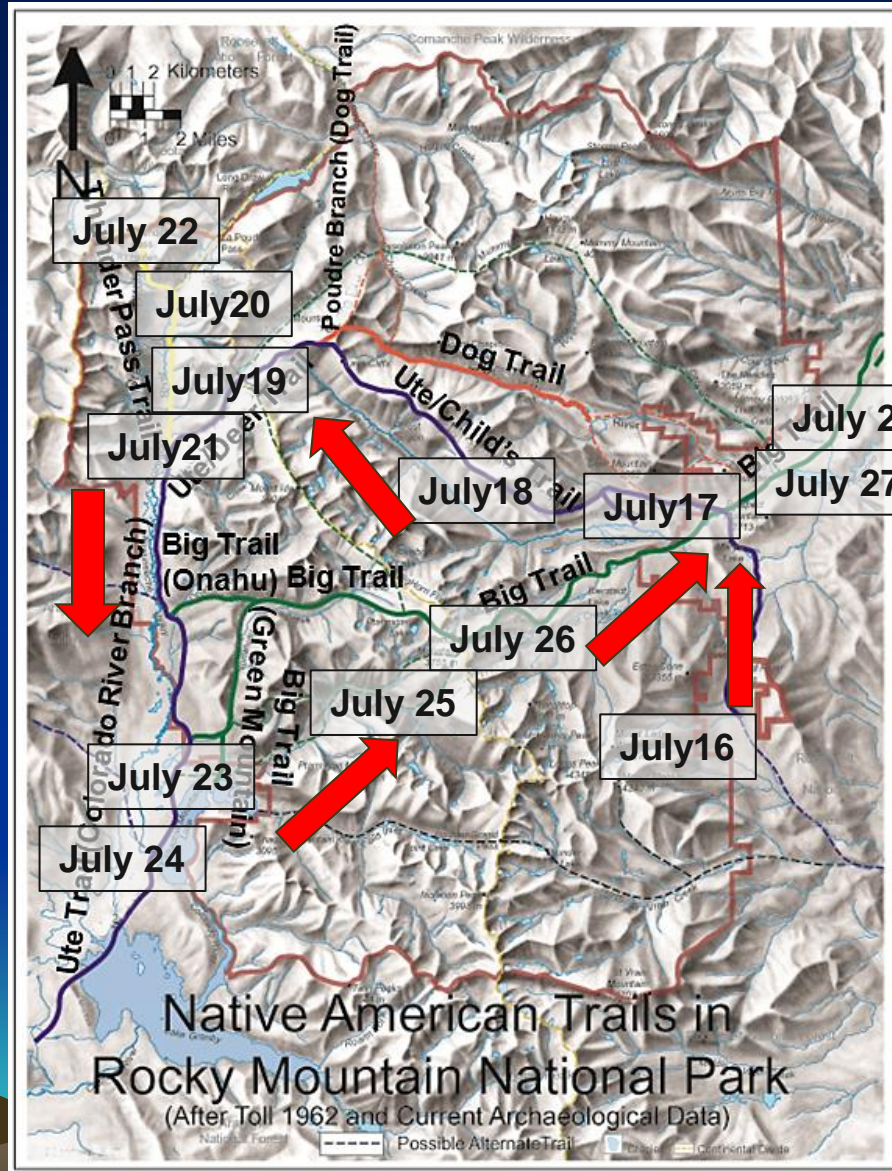


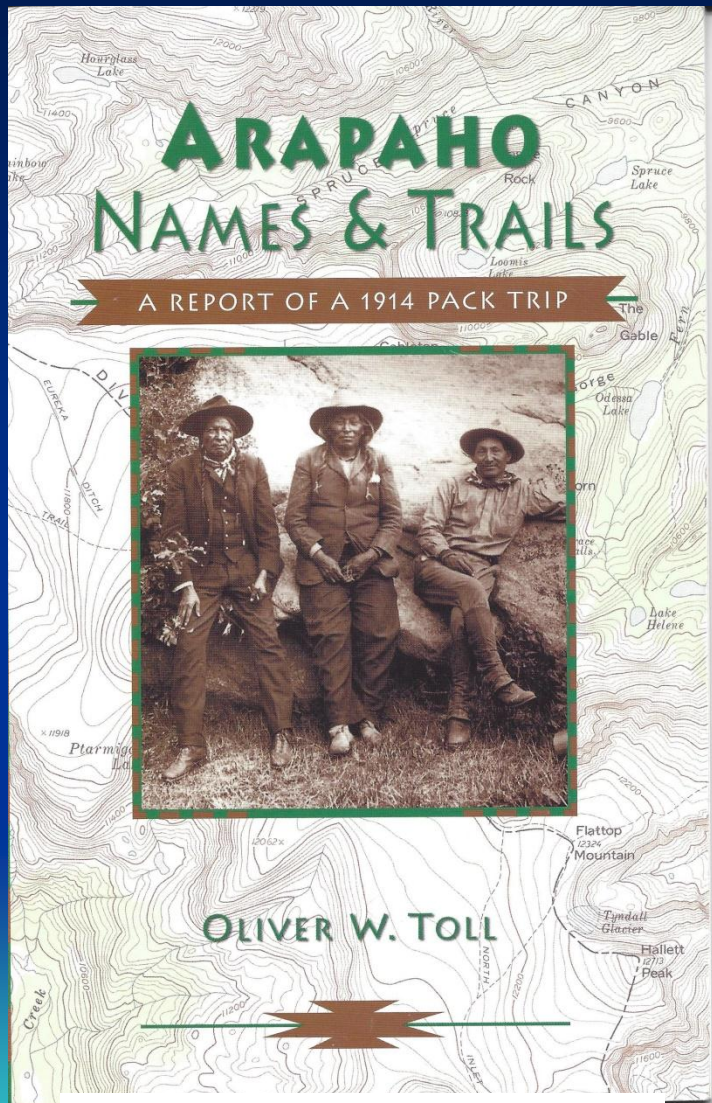
## **Earliest Native American Ethnohistory of the Park: the 1914 Arapaho Pack Trip and its Preamble to RMNP**

- **Trip (July 16-28, 1914) arranged by the Colorado Mountain Club to support congressional legislation (Native American Place-Names) to create Rocky Mountain National Park.**
- **Arapaho informants: Sherman Sage (63) and Gun Griswold (73) from the Arapaho & Crow Wind River Reservation who visited the park to hunt with their families from the 1850s through 1870s.**
- **Irony of the trip: the Park was Ute traditional land for over a thousand years before the Ute were removed to reservations in the 1870s.**



# The Pack Trip route and Arapaho-identified trails in RMNP

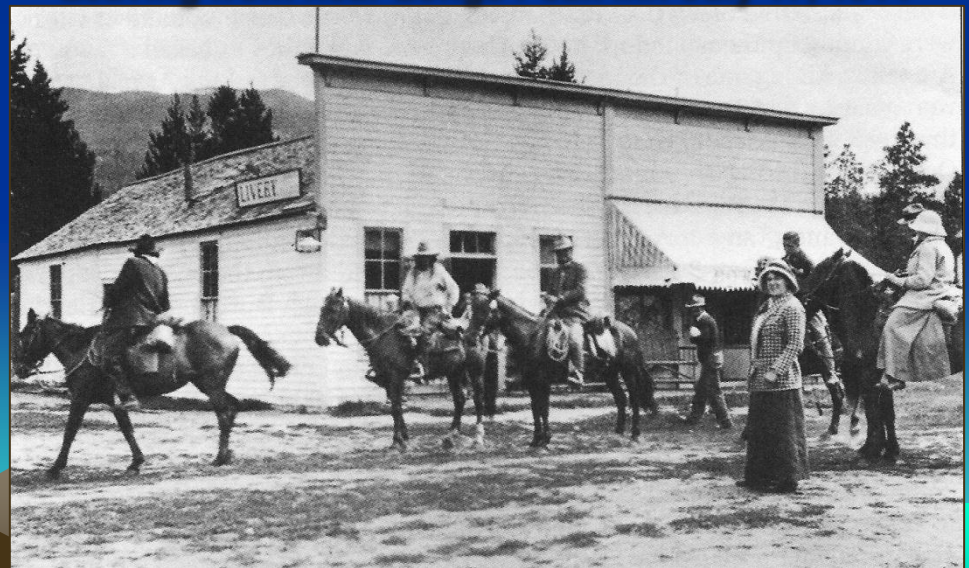


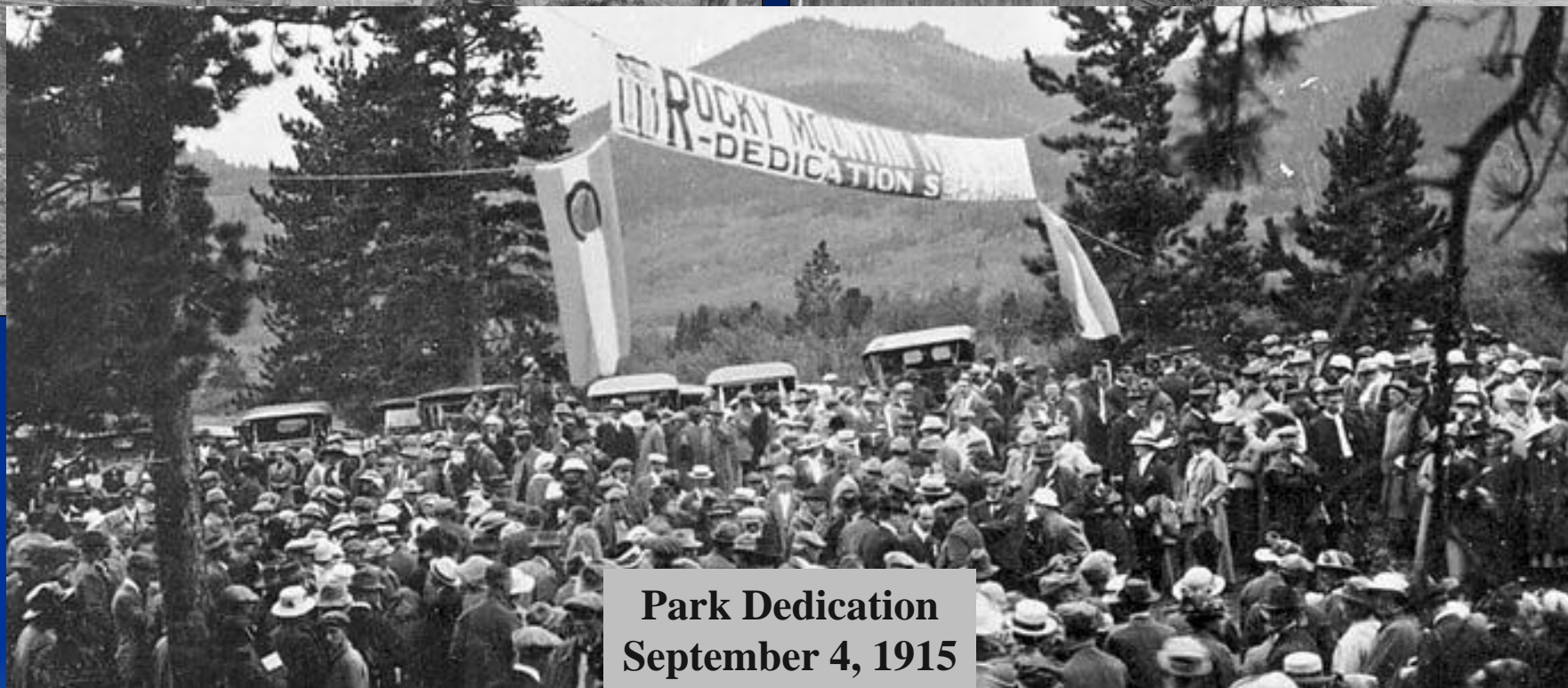


1<sup>st</sup> Edn: 1962; 2<sup>nd</sup> Edn: 2003



Leaving from near Longs Peak Inn-July 17, 1914





**Park Dedication  
September 4, 1915**



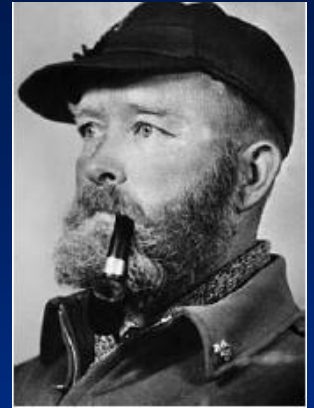
**Lulu Pass, July 22, 1914**



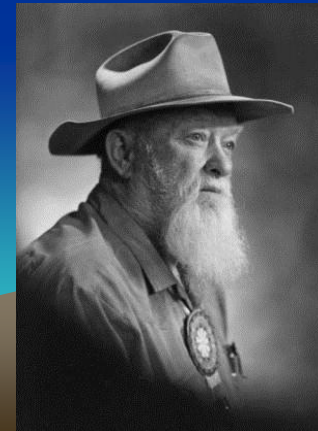
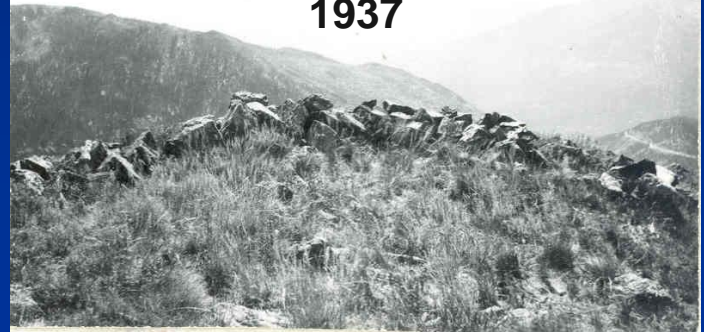
**a Native American  
Trail Cairn**

## **Jacob (Jack) Clifford Moomaw-Rocky Mountain National Park Ranger (1892-1974)**

- **WW I Veteran, Seasonal Park employee-1920-1923**
- **Park Ranger-1923 to 1945**
- **Amateur artifact (“arrow-head”) collector**
- **First identified tundra game drives in the park in 1930s**
- **Few of his park-collected artifacts ended up in Park archives, later the RMNP Museum**



**Mount Ida Ridge Game Drive Wall  
1937**

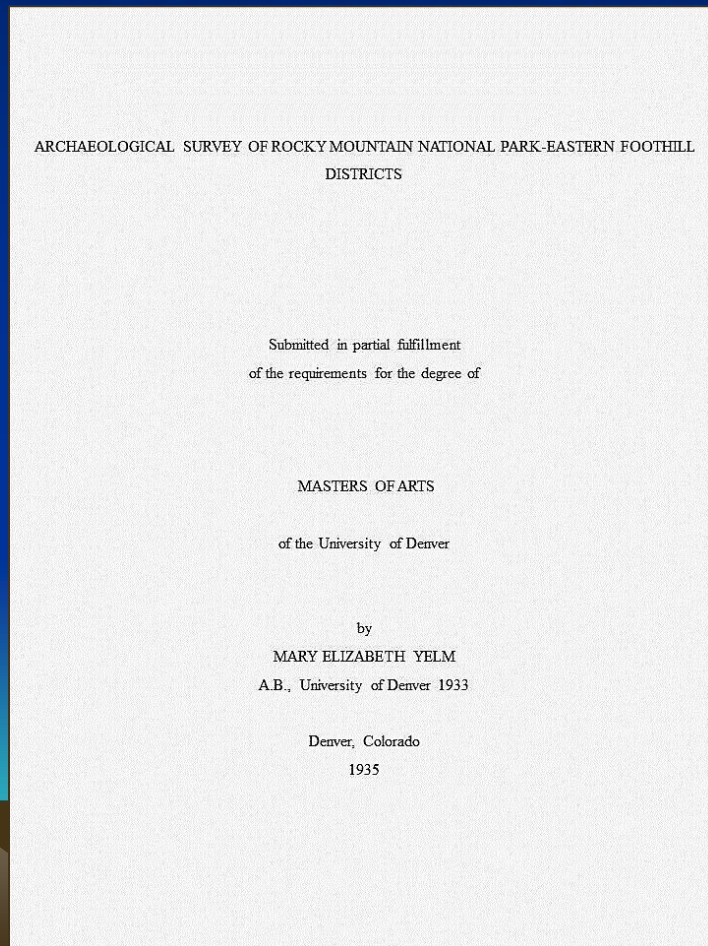


# Early Pioneer Archaeologists in Rocky Mountain National Park

## Elizabeth Yelm (DU MA Thesis)

1933 and 1934

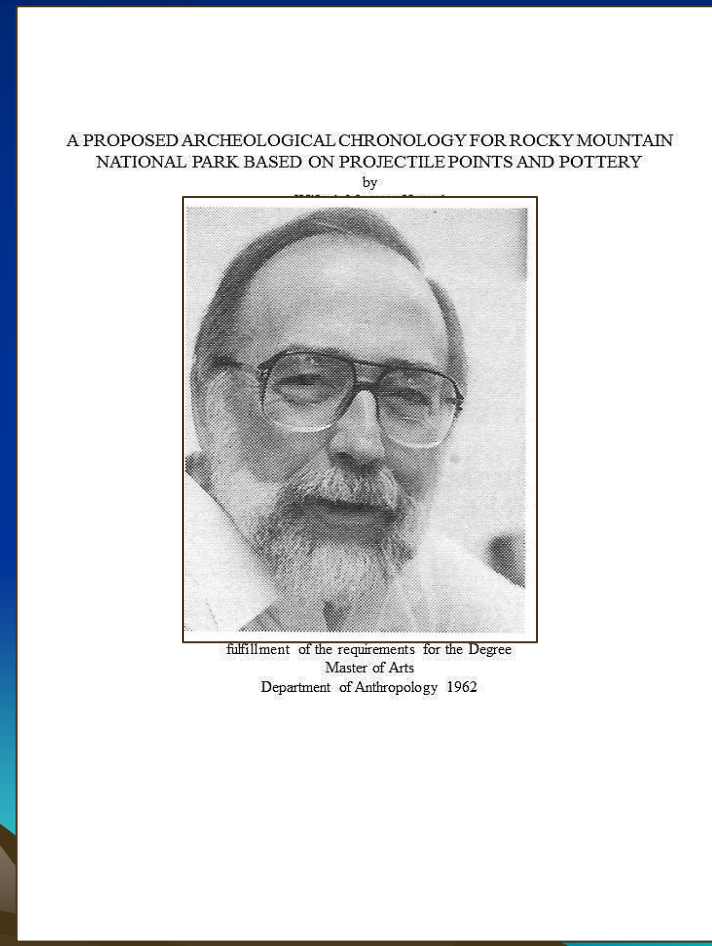
- RMNP Museum artifact study
- visited some sites guided by Jack Moomaw
- Assisted by local artifact collectors
- Identified 40 sites inside RMNP boundaries



## Wil Husted (CU MA Thesis)

1960 and 1961

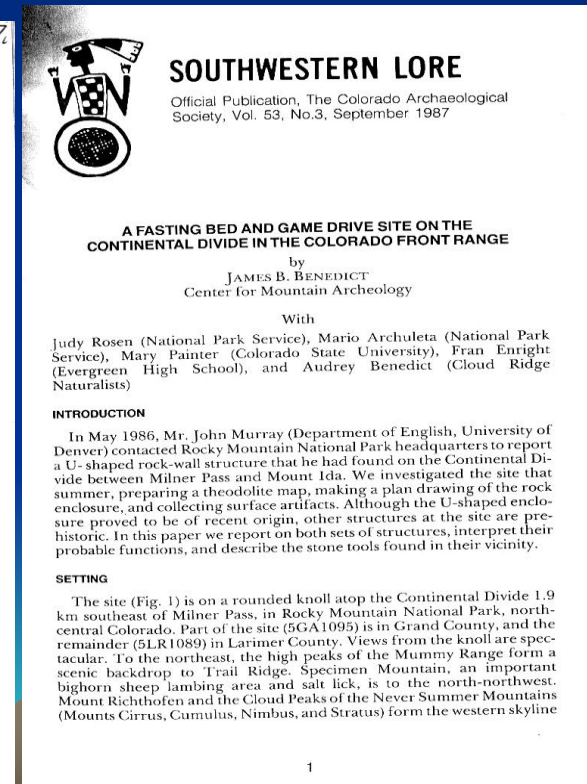
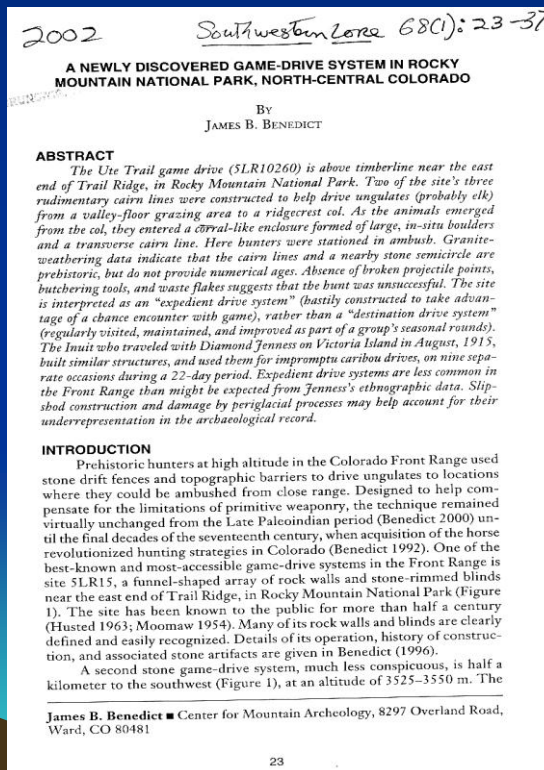
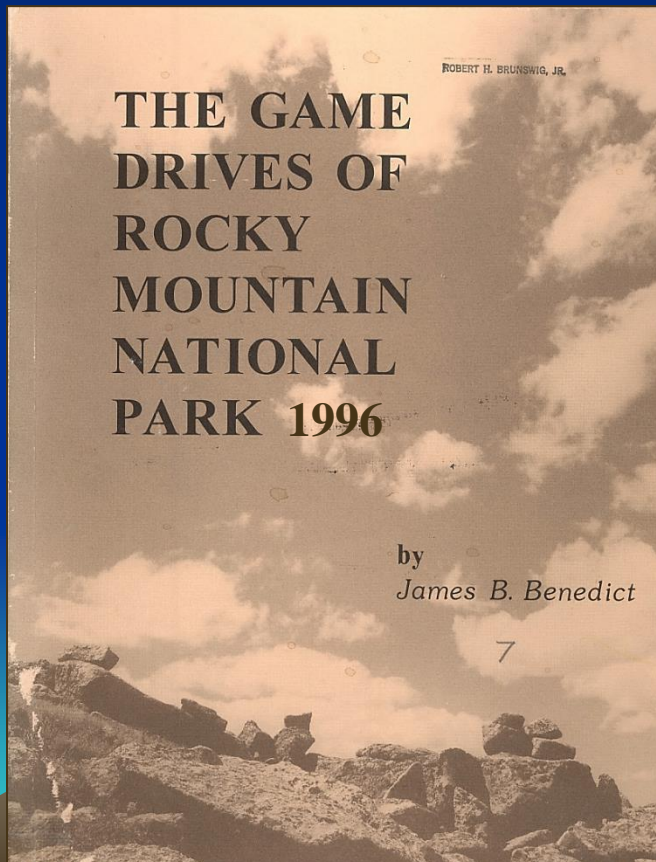
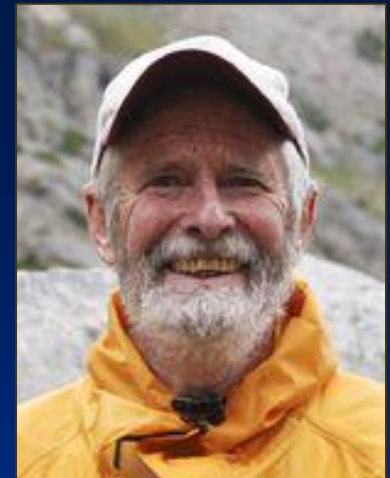
- NPS partial funding
- Actual site survey, most at high altitude
- 20 sites documented, some were earlier Yelm sites



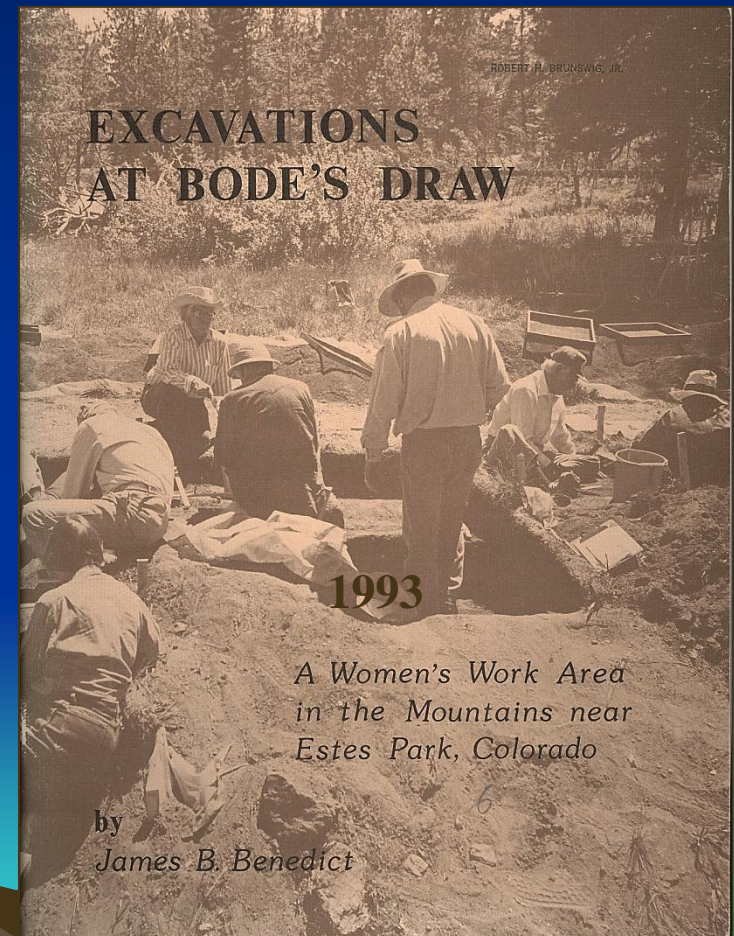
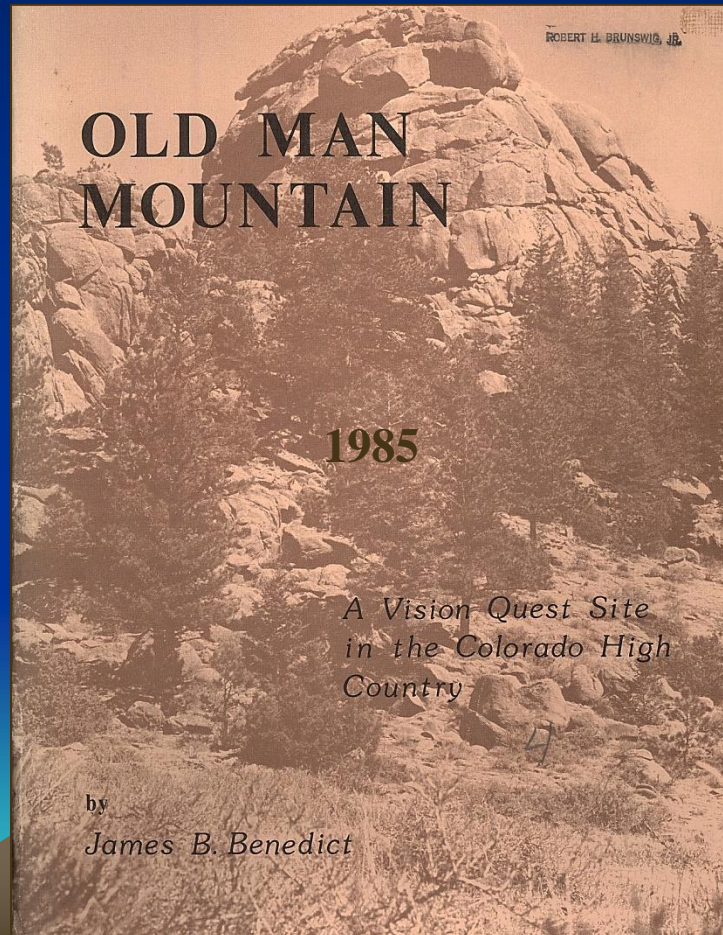
# Dr. Jim Benedict

## Front Range Mountain Geology-Archaeology Research (1963 to 2009)

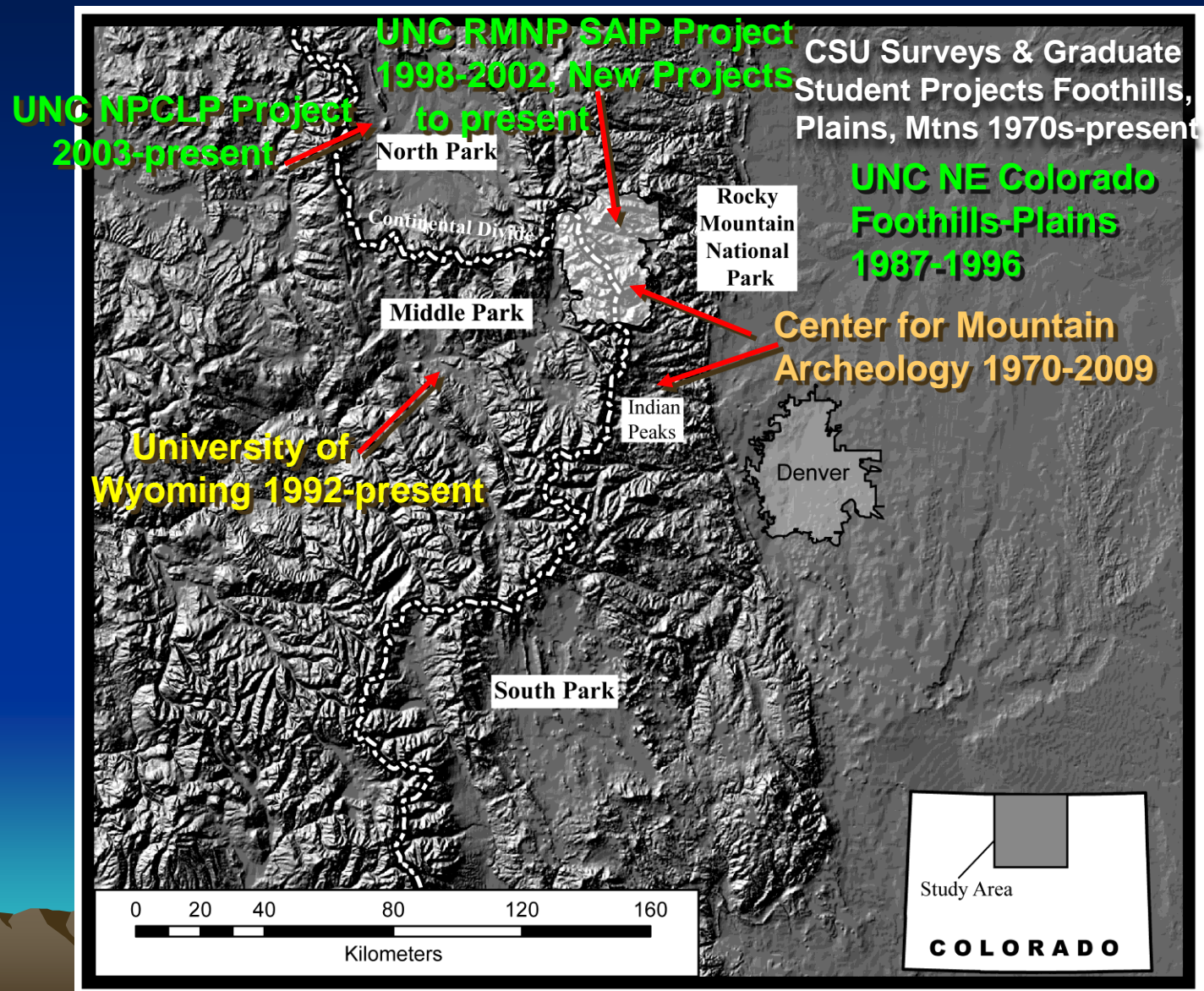
- Est. Center for Mountain Archaeology in 1970
- Main work in Indian Peaks area to south
- Geology and archaeology studies in RMNP from mid-1980s through 2009



- Two of Jim's important projects just outside park boundaries were Old Man Mountain (owned by UNC) and Bode's Draw
- His Old Man Mountain work on a vision quest site paved the way for UNC's Sacred Landscapes Project (2000-present)



# 1970 to Present: 45 Years of Continuous Archaeological Field Research Programs in the Northern Colorado Mountains, Foothills, & Plains



# UNC/Rocky Mountain National Park Systemwide Archeological Inventory Program (SAIP)-1998 to 2002 with smaller specialized field projects-2002-present

- 30,000 acres surveyed
- 429 new prehistoric and 626 historic sites recorded
- relocated, re-surveyed and re-recorded earlier Yelm-Husted-Benedict identified sites
- Geographic Information System computer mapping of Park archaeological sites
- Paleoenvironment-paleoclimate research to 11,000 years ago
- Spiritual landscapes research involving Native American elders

**Prehistoric, Protohistoric, and Early Historic  
Native American Archeology of Rocky  
Mountain National Park: Volume 1-Final  
Report of Systemwide Archeological  
Inventory Program Investigations by the  
University of Northern Colorado (1998-2002)**

Robert H. Brunswig, Ph.D.  
Anthropology Program  
School of Social Sciences  
University of Northern Colorado  
Greeley, Colorado

2005

Prepared for the:  
National Park Service  
Rocky Mountain National Park  
Intermountain Region  
Department of the Interior

Cooperative Agreement: 1443-CA-1248-007  
Project Number: ROMO-R98-0804

**THE HISTORIC ARCHEOLOGY  
OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK**

William B. Butler, Ph.D.  
Park Archeologist

2005

National Park Service  
Rocky Mountain National Park  
Intermountain Region  
Department of the Interior

**Native American Lives and  
Sacred Landscapes in Rocky  
Mountain National Park**

Robert H. Brunswig, Ph.D.  
Anthropology Program

David Diggs, Ph.D.  
Geography Program  
School of Social Sciences  
University of Northern Colorado  
Greeley, Colorado

Christine Chady Montgomery, B.A.  
Department of Anthropology  
University of Wyoming  
Laramie, Wyoming

2009

Prepared Under:

Cooperative Agreement: 1443-CA-1248-007

**MODELING PALEOENVIRONMENTAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL  
LANDSCAPES OF ANCIENT GAME DRIVE SYSTEMS IN ROCKY  
MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK, NORTH CENTRAL COLORADO**

James P. Doerner, Ph.D. and Robert H. Brunswig, Ph.D.

Departments of Geography and Anthropology  
University of Northern Colorado  
Greeley, Colorado

2008

Cooperative Agreement Number CA 1268-1-9012  
Project Number: ROMO-R00-0032, UNC-12

## Fourteen Years of Archaeological Fieldwork (1998-2012)



# 11,300 Years of Prehistoric to Early Historic Native American Occupations In Rocky Mountain National Park Site (defined by Diagnostic Projectile [spear & arrow]) Point Types and Radiocarbon-dated Hearth Charcoal)

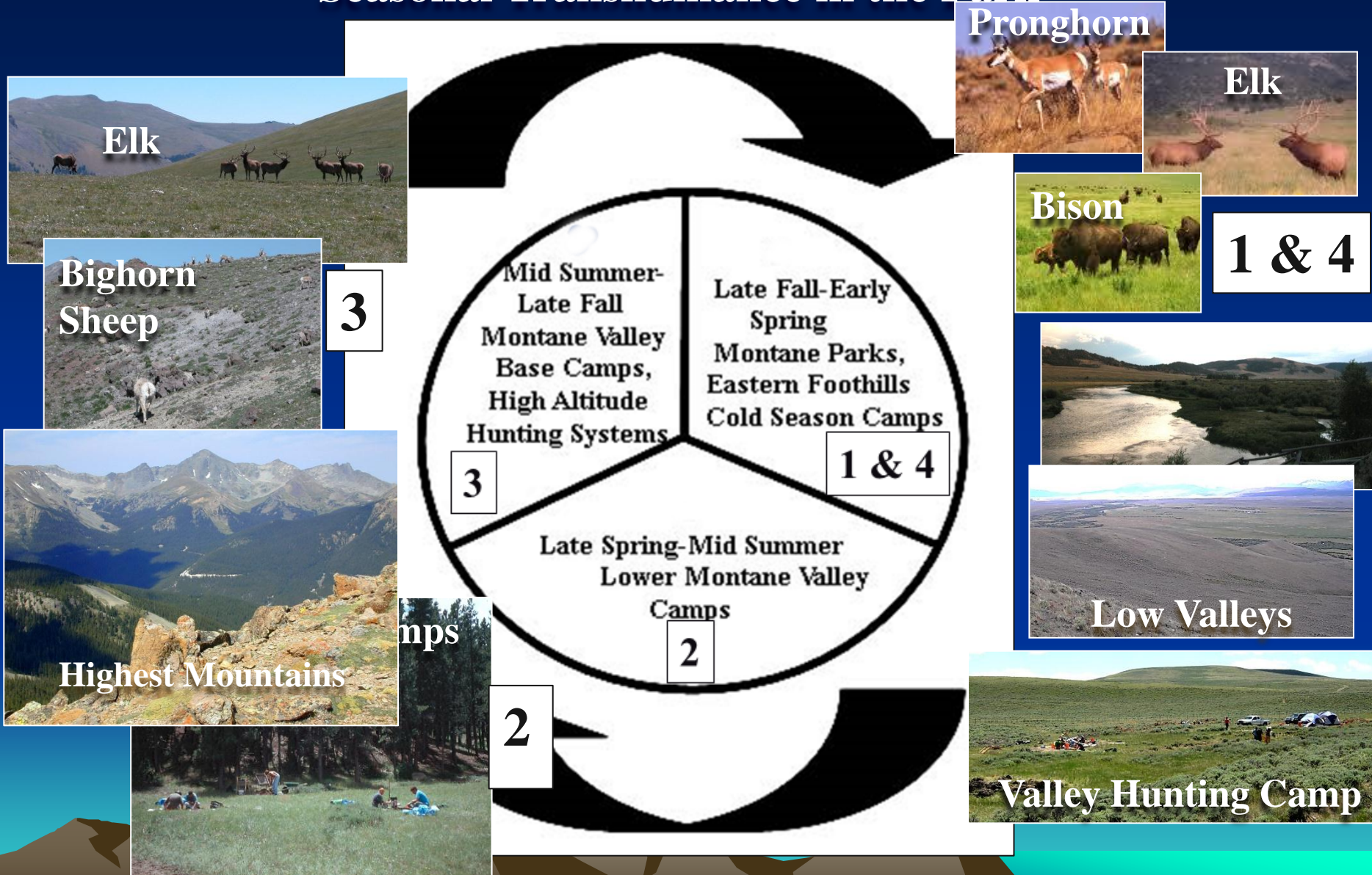
11,300 Years Ago



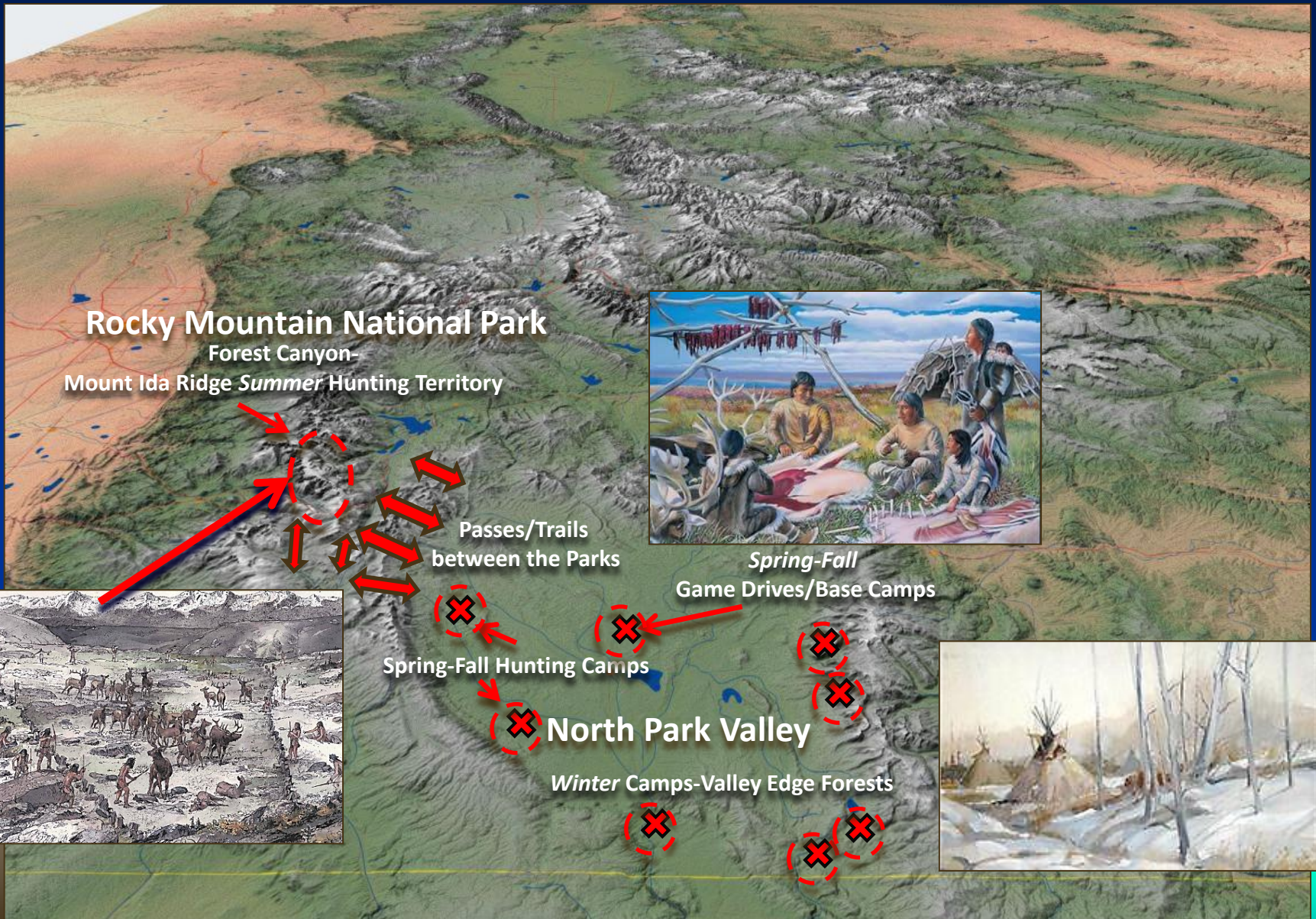
150 Years Ago

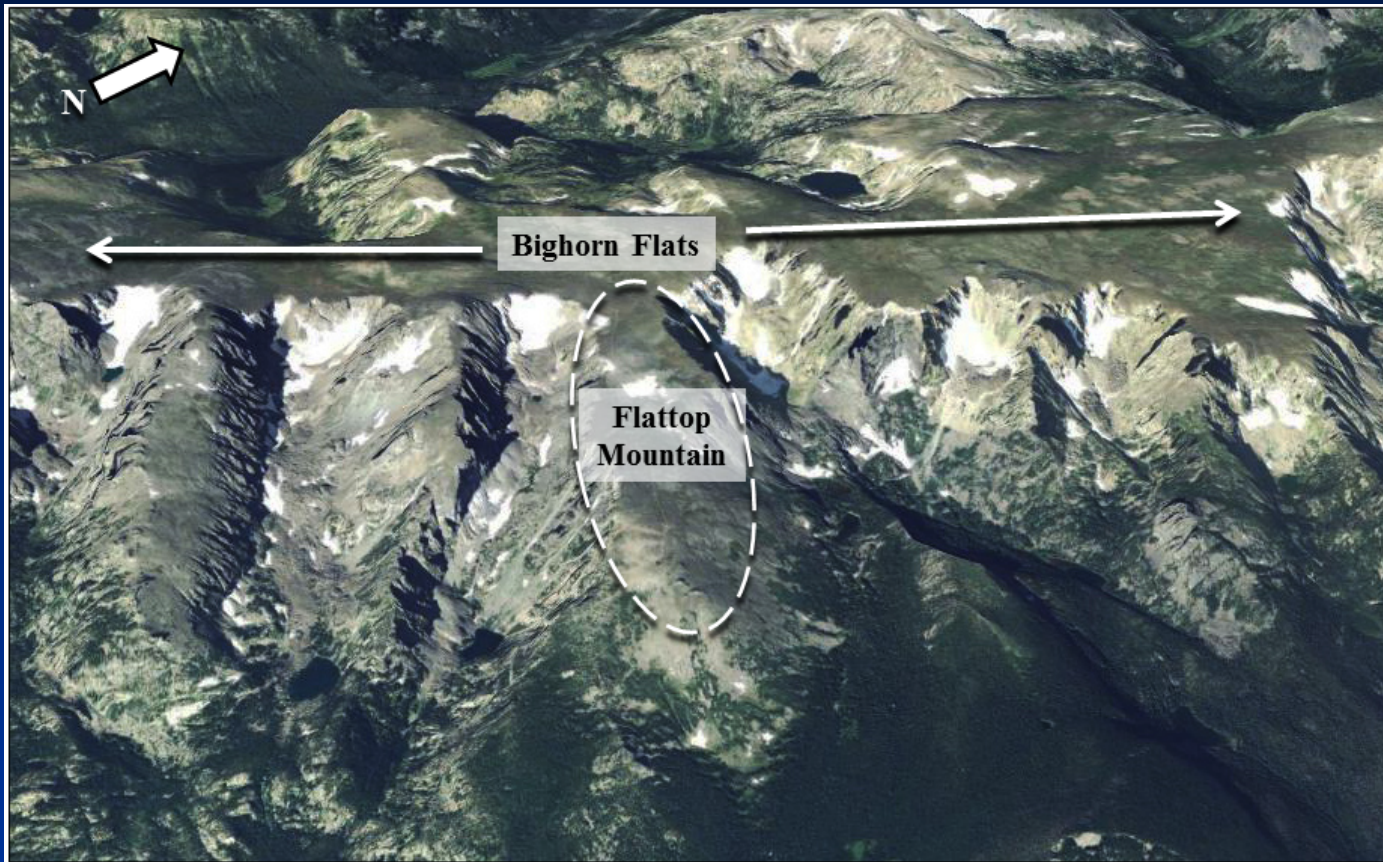
Southern Rocky Mountain Cultural Periods	Conventional Radiocarbon-Date Range	Calendar-Age (Calibrated Age) Range
Early Paleoindian Period Cultures: Clovis; Folsom; Goshen	Clovis-11,300-10,900 BP; Goshen-10,450-10,153 BP; Folsom-10,950-10,250 BP	Clovis-13,185-12,851 BP; Goshen-12,500-11,800 BP; Folsom-12,871-12,007 BP
Middle Paleoindian Period Culture: Agate Basin	Agate Basin-10,430-9,350 BP	12,200-10,590 BP
Late Paleoindian Period Cultures: Cody Complex, James Allen-Frederick, Mountain Paleoindian	9,400-7,700 BP	10,689-7,835 BP
Early Archaic Period	7,500-5000 BP	8,287-5,738 BP
Middle Archaic Period	5,000-3,000 BP	5,738-3,165 BP
Late Archaic Period	3,000-1,900 BP	3,165-1,735 BP
Early Late Prehistoric Period: Early Ceramic/Plains Woodland Culture	1,900-900 BP	1,735-856 BP
Late Late Prehistoric Period: Middle & Late Ceramic Periods	900-650 BP	856-642 BP
Terminal Late Prehistoric-Protohistoric- Early Historic Periods	650-85 BP	642-85 BP

# 10,000+ Years of Native American Hunter and Game Animal Seasonal Transhumance in the Park



# Annual Transhumance between Interior Basin Valley Spring-Early Summer/Late Summer-Fall Camps/Winter Camps to High Mountain Hunting Territories (Rocky Mountain National Park)





- The *Flattop Mountain Game Drive* (5LR6) is one of the largest and most complex prehistoric sites in the Park.
- It was first identified by Jack Moomaw and Elizabeth Yelm (1930s) and later by Wil Husted (1961), then mapped in detail using aerial photos by Jim Benedict in 1992.
- UNC later did surveys and test excavations.

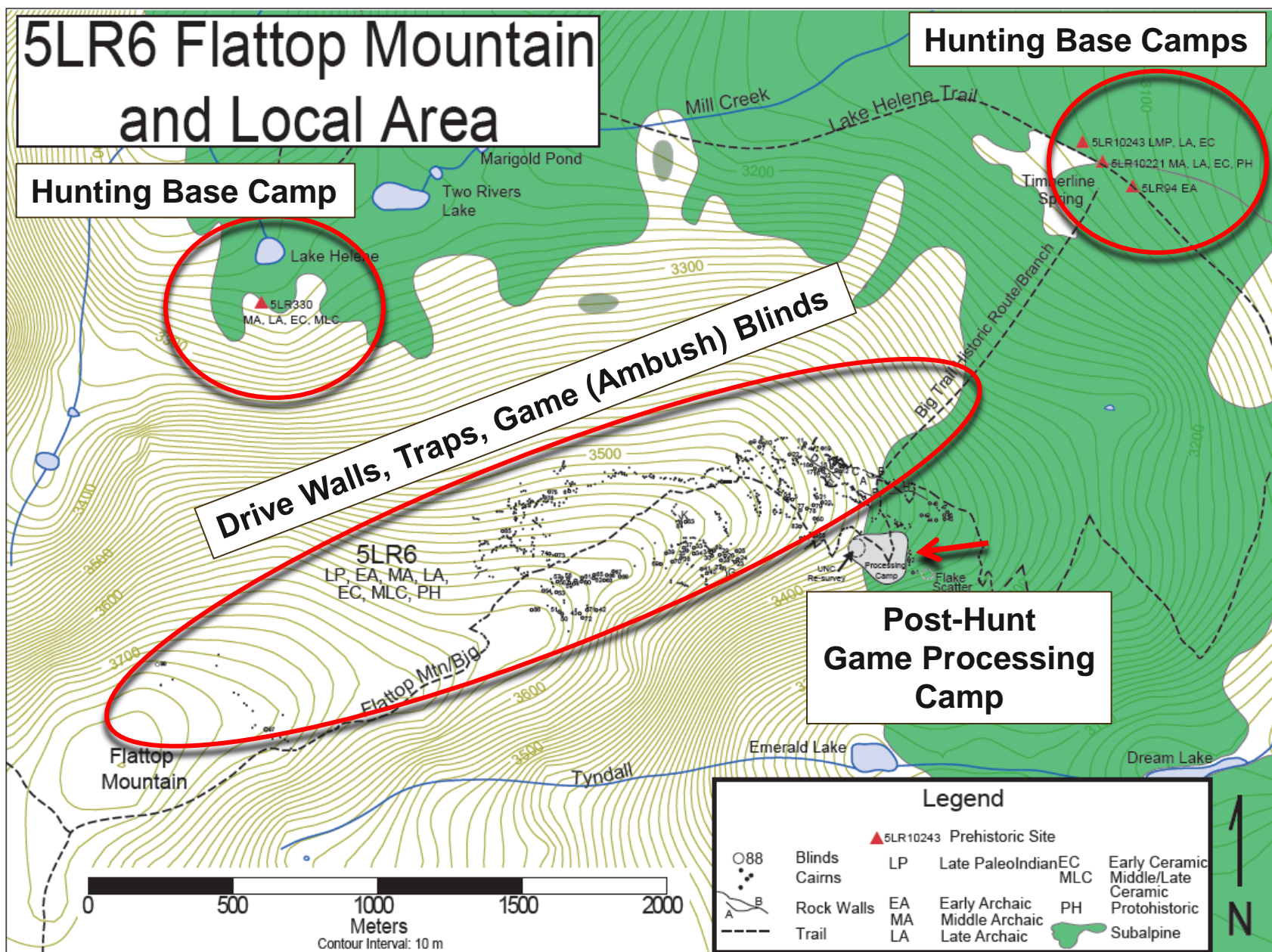
# 5LR6 Flattop Mountain and Local Area

## Hunting Base Camps

## Hunting Base Camp

## Drive Walls, Traps, Game (Ambush) Blinds

## Post-Hunt Game Processing Camp



# 5LR10243 Hunting Base Camp

Five Cultural Period Occupations based on Evidence of Six Projectile Points and a Hearth Radiocarbon Date:

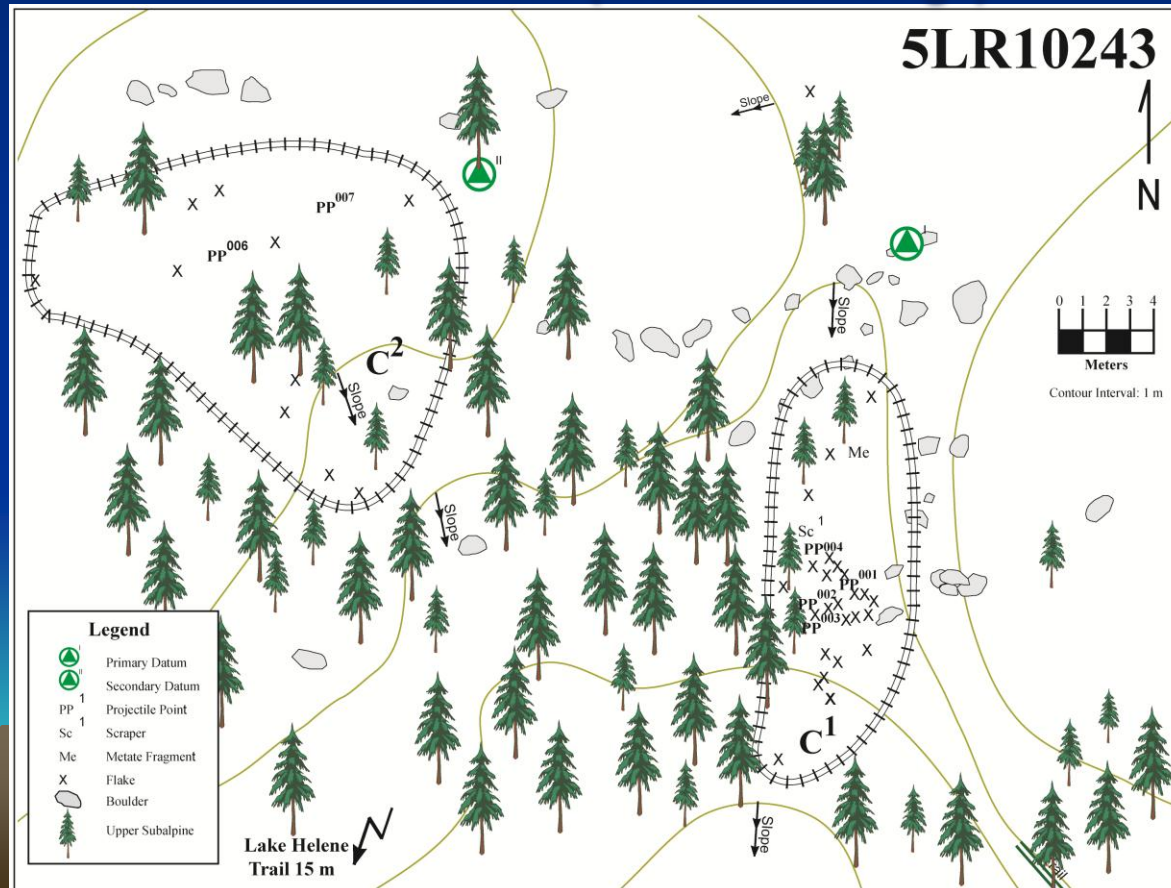
*Late Paleoindian Period (10,689-7,835 Years Ago)*

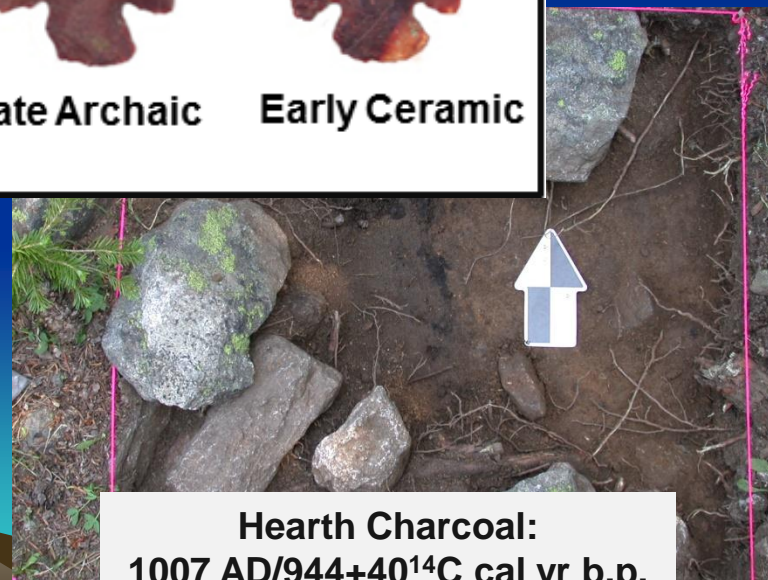
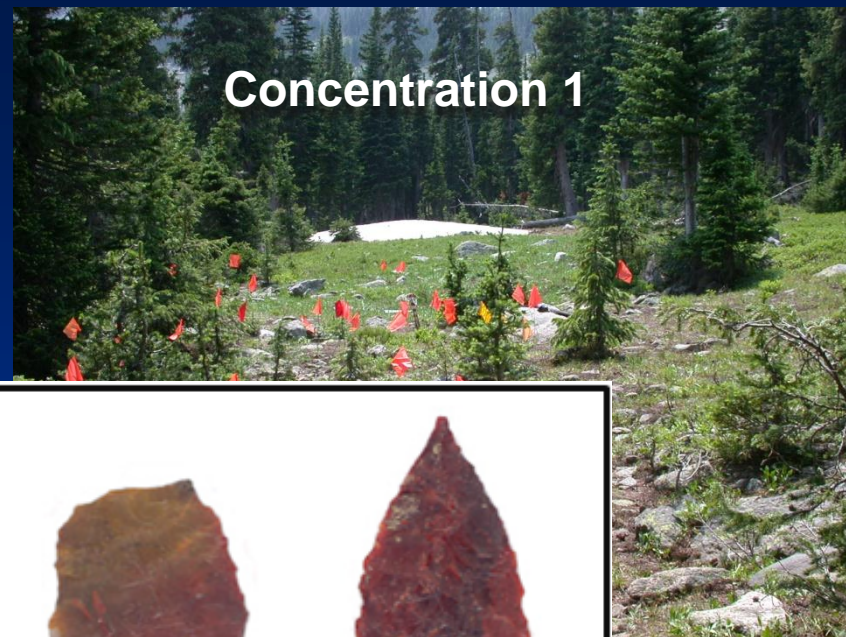
*Early Archaic Period (7,416-5,738 Years Ago)*

*Late Archaic Period (3,165-1,735 Years Ago)*

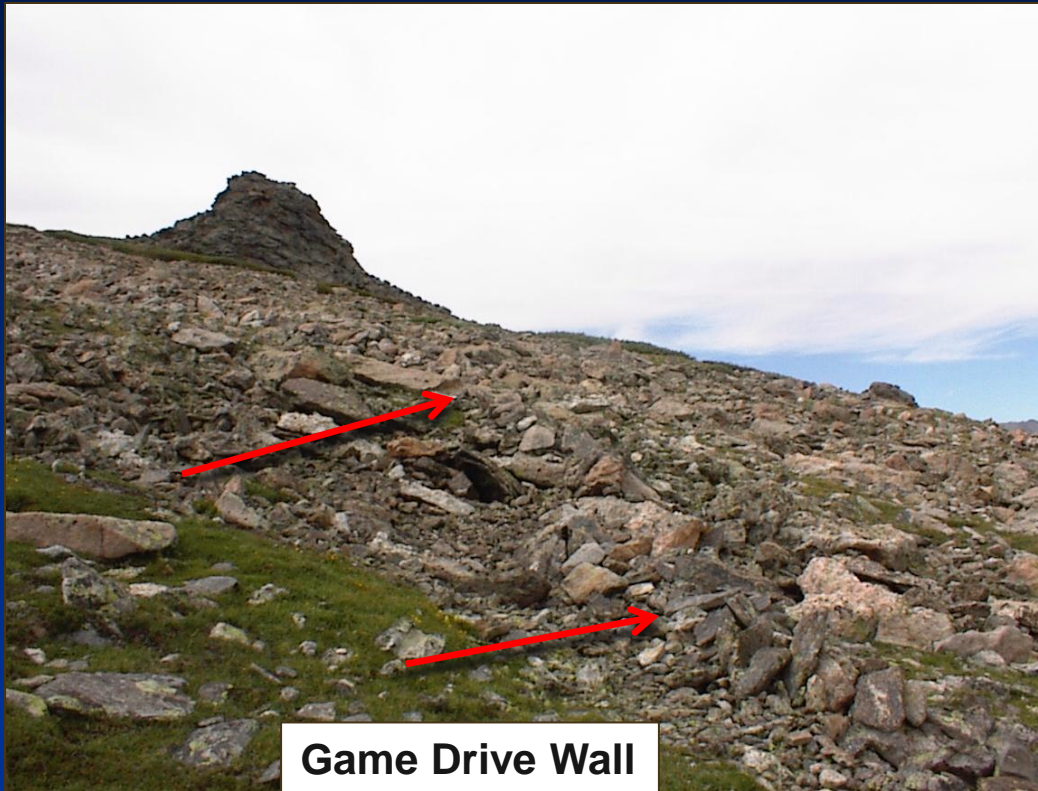
*Early Ceramic Period (1,735-856 Years Ago)*

*Middle/Late Ceramic (856-642 Years Ago)*

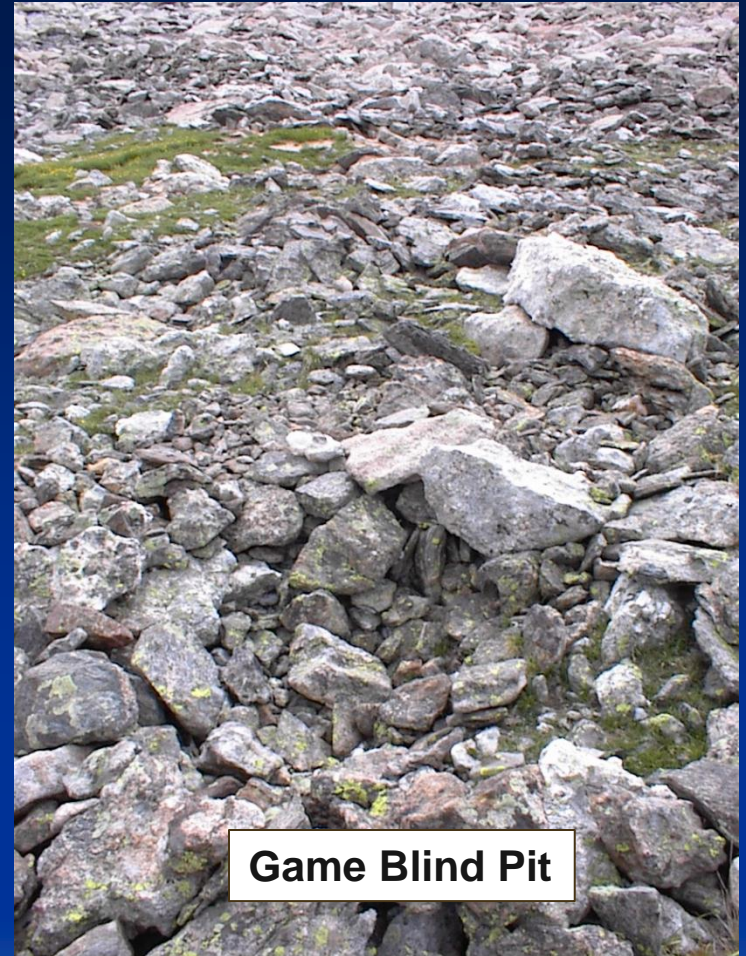




**Hearth Charcoal:**  
**1007 AD/944 $\pm$ 40<sup>14</sup>C cal yr b.p.**  
**(Beta-169189),**



**Game Drive Wall**



**Game Blind Pit**



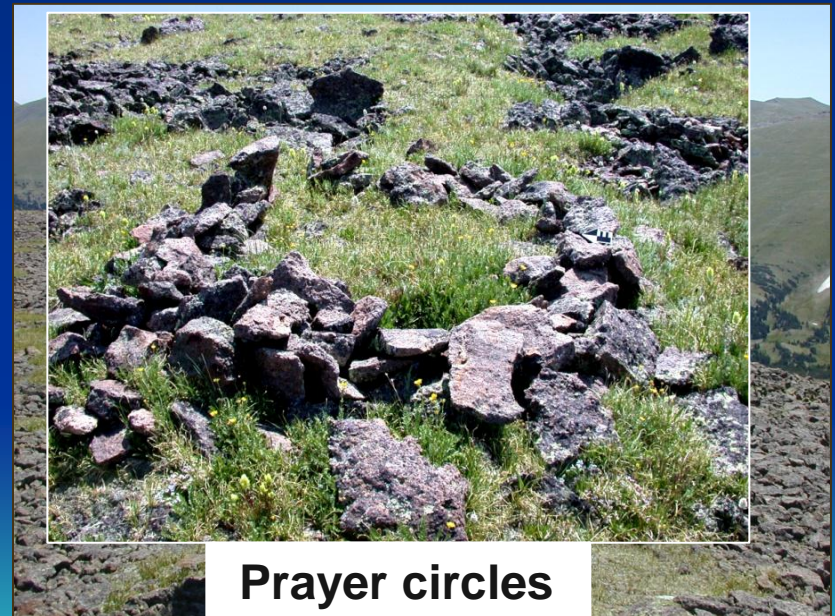
**Late Paleoindian Projectile Points**  
**Cody (left)-9,500-8,200 Years Ago**  
**James Allen-Frederick (right)**  
**9,350-7,900 Years Ago**

# Sacred Landscapes Research in the Park and Beyond

- University of Northern Colorado Sacred Landscapes Project-2001 to present
- RMNP and neighboring North Park/Middle Park Valleys
- Identifying ritual stone features (archaeology), study of and consultations on Native American religious beliefs and practices, and geographic analysis of ritual place locations on Southern Rocky Mountain landscapes



**Vision quest features**



**Prayer circles**

**Consultation visits with Northern Ute Elder Clifford Duncan & Tribal Heritage Specialist Betsy Chapoose**



**Ritual Offering Shrine/Altar**



**Eagle's Head Effigy (North Park)**



**Ritual/Astronomical  
Rock Alignments (North Park)**

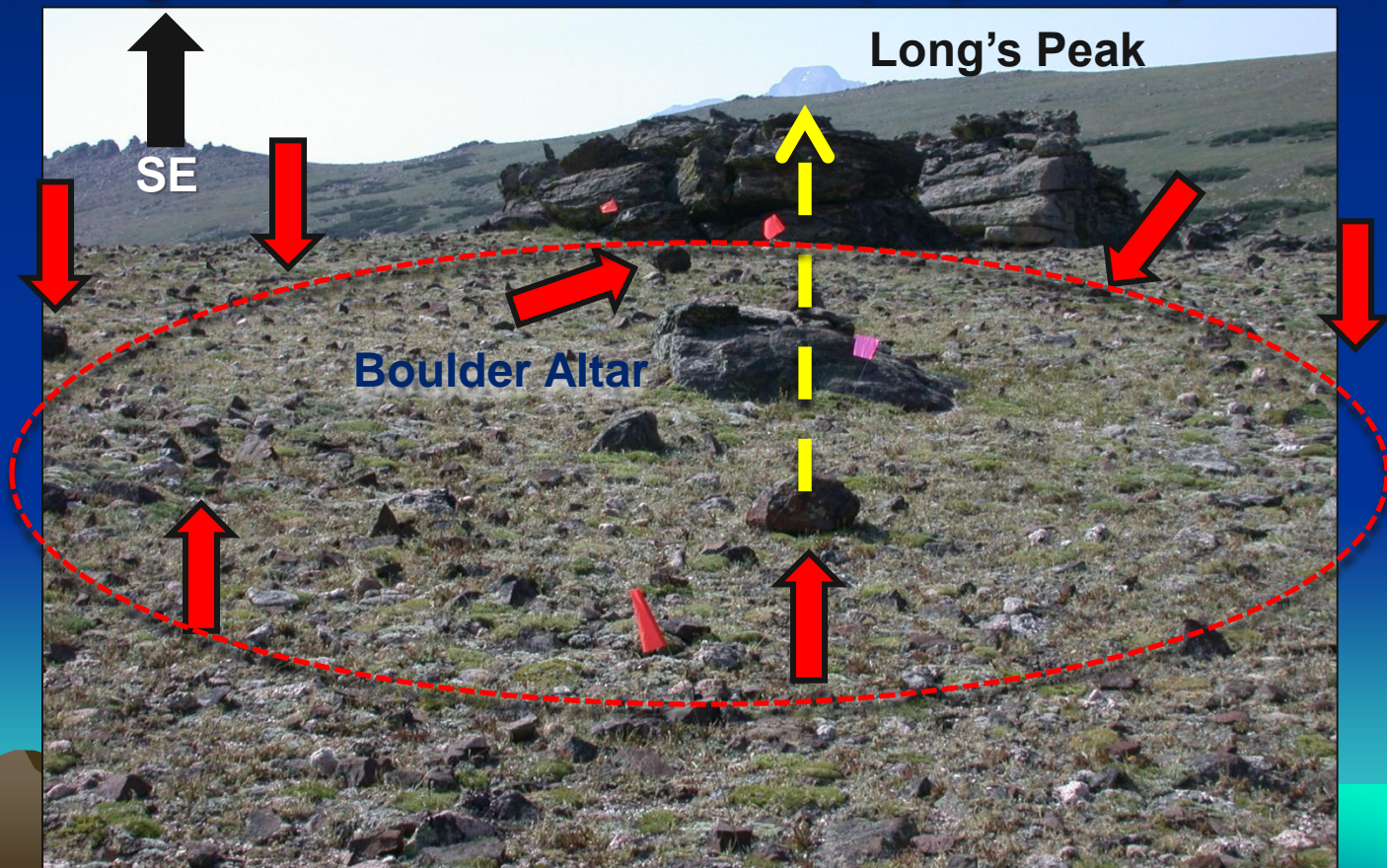
## Origins of the Park's Spiritual Sites

- Studies of identified spiritual (sacred) sites and ritual features by UNC researchers are mostly attributed to ancestral Utes.
- Archaeological excavations by UNC in nearby North Park valley and radiocarbon dates on prehistoric Ute pottery and hunting camp charcoal show Utes were in the park and region at least a 1,000 years ago.
- A few even more ancient sacred rock features may be older than the arrival of the Utes a 1,000 years ago.

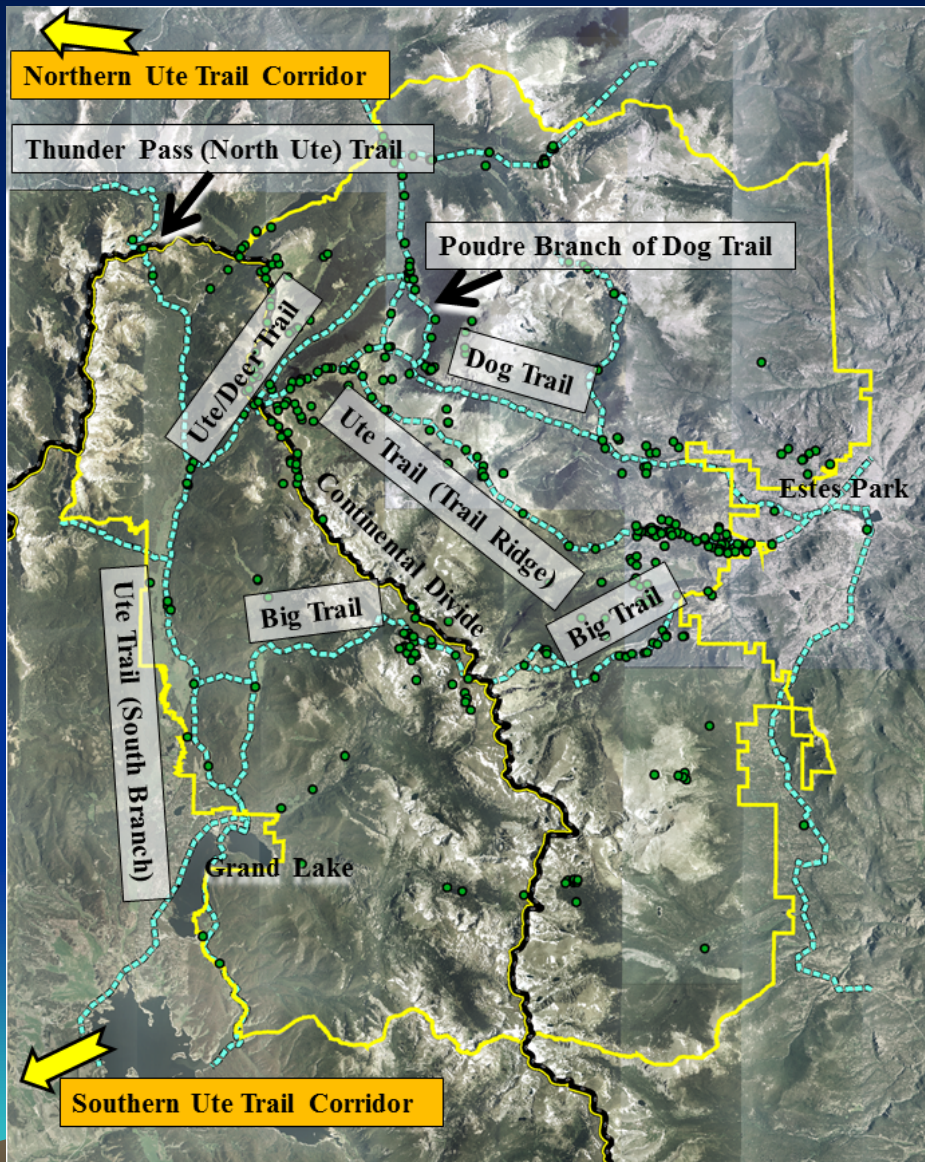


- A few rock features such as medicine wheels, some crescent wall vision quests, and rock-ringed dance circles represent late-arriving (ca. AD 1780-1820) Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Sioux.

### Trail Ridge Game Drive Medicine Wheel (Arapaho/Cheyenne/Sioux)

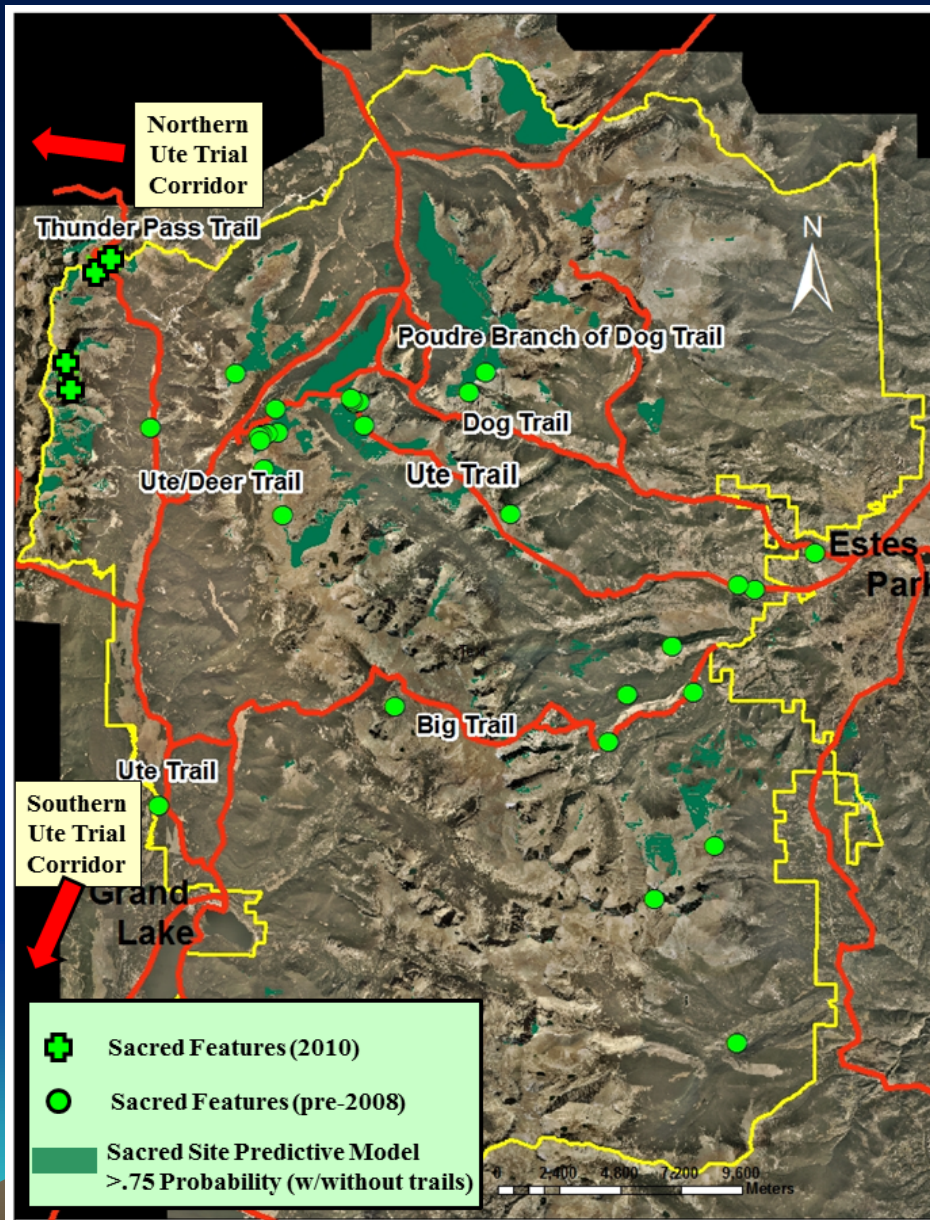


# New Insights into Native American Trails and Park Prehistory



- Native American prehistoric & early historic sites were found heavily clustered along 1914 Pack Trip identified trails
- All the trails are ancient, most close to sites with projectile points dating 10,000 years or earlier
- The Ute Trail has Clovis points along its highest (Trail Ridge) section dating it to over 11,000 years.



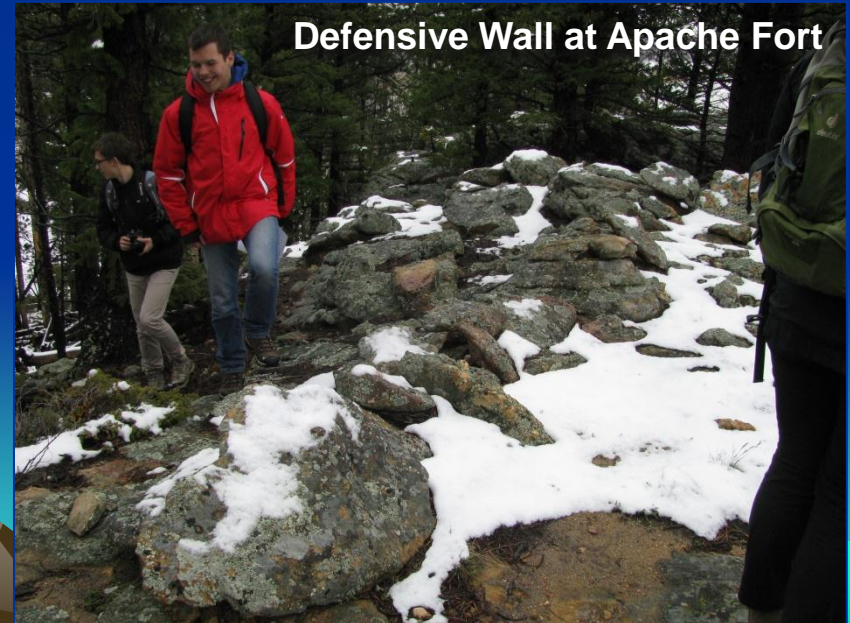


- The park's Native American trails are connected to many sacred ritual sites
- A Ute elder remarked that the park's Native trails channeled spiritual energy across its mountains and valleys, connecting spiritually powerful natural landmarks and ritual sites

# Revisiting & re-documenting other 1914 Arapaho Pack Trip Locations

Apache Raid on Arapaho in 1855

Apache Fort Battle Site in Beaver Meadows



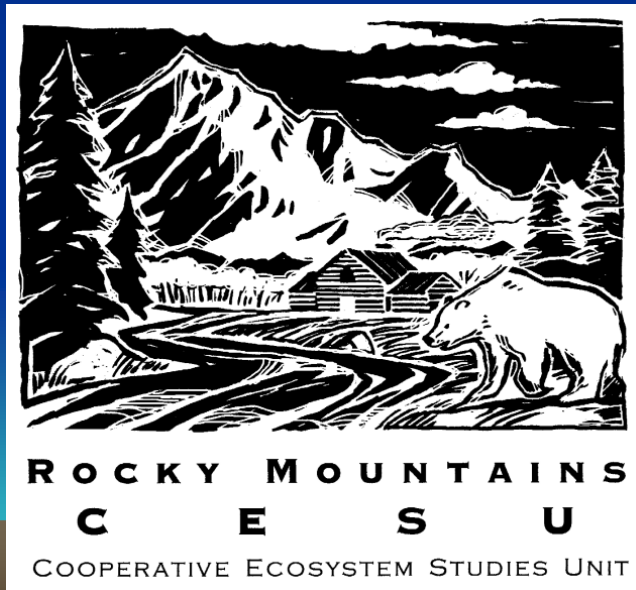
# Appreciation for Funding and Agency/Institutional Support for UNC's Park Research from 1998-2014

## Rocky Mountain National Park

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



UNC Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP)



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ECONOMICS, ENGLISH, GEOGRAPHY, HISPANIC STUDIES,  
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THANK-YOU!

PRESENTATIONS POSTED :

[http://www.nps.gov/rlc/continentaldive/index  
.htm](http://www.nps.gov/rlc/continentaldive/index.htm)